

Attorney's Docket: 1999DE122
Serial No.: 09/578,421
Group: 1714

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the preparation of (metal) salts of alkylphosphonous acids, which comprises reacting elemental yellow phosphorus with at least one halogen-free alkylating agents-agent in the presence of at least one base.
2. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in a two-phase system comprising at least one base and ~~an~~ at least one organic solvent.
3. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one alkylating ~~agents-are~~ is selected from the group consisting of dialkyl sulfates, trialkyl phosphates, dialkyl carbonates and/or formic acid ortho-esters.
4. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim ~~42~~, wherein the at least one organic solvents-employed ~~are~~ solvent is selected from the group consisting of straight-chain or branched alkanes, alkyl-substituted aromatic solvents, water-immiscible or only partially water-miscible alcohols, water-immiscible or only partially water-miscible or ethers, and combinations thereof. ~~, alone or in combination with one another.~~
5. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim ~~42~~, wherein the at least one organic solvent employed ~~is~~ is toluene, alone or in combination with alcohols.
6. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ~~bases-are~~ at least one base is selected from the group consisting of hydroxides, carbonates, bicarbonates, amides, alkoxides and/or amine bases.

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7. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of a phase-transfer catalyst.

8. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 7, wherein the phase-transfer catalyst is a tetraalkylphosphonium halide, triphenylalkylphosphonium halide or tetra-organylammonium halide.

9. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the temperature during the reaction is from -20 to +60°C.

10. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the temperature is from 0 to 30°C.

11. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure of from 0 to 10 bar.

12. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the yellow phosphorus is suspended or dissolved in a solvent or solvent mixture and then reacted with ~~a~~ the at least one halogen-free alkylating agent and the at least one base.

13. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the yellow phosphorus and the at least one halogen-free alkylating agent are reacted in a molar ratio of from 1:1 to 1:3, where the molar ratio of yellow phosphorus to the at least one base is from 1:1 to 1:5.

14. through 19. (Cancelled)